

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A B cell epitope peptide comprising the amino acid sequence as denoted by SEQ ID  
2 NO:1.
- 1 2. A B cell epitope peptide as claimed in claim 1 having the amino acid sequence as  
2 denoted by SEQ ID NO:2.
- 1 3. A B cell epitope peptide as claimed in claim 1 having the amino acid sequence as  
2 denoted by SEQ ID NO:3.
- 1 4. A B cell epitope peptide comprising the amino acid sequence as denoted by SEQ ID  
2 NO:4.
- 1 5. A B cell epitope peptide as claimed in claim 1, being a synthetic peptide.
- 1 6. A chemically modified peptide according to claim 5.
- 1 7. A B cell epitope peptide as claimed in claim 1 capable of conferring immunity against  
2 autoimmune and/or inflammatory disorders.
- 1 8. A nucleic acid sequence encoding a B cell epitope peptide as claimed in claim 1.
- 1 9. A DNA sequence as claimed in to claim 8.
- 1 10. A DNA sequence as claimed in claim 9 comprising the nucleic acid sequence as  
2 denoted by SEQ ID NO:5.
- 1 11. A DNA construct comprising a nucleic acid sequence as claimed in claim 8.
- 1 12. A DNA construct comprising the DNA sequence as claimed in claim 9.
- 1 13. A vaccine comprising as active ingredient an effective vaccinating amount of at least  
2 one B cell epitope peptide as claimed in claim 1, optionally further comprising  
3 pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, diluent, additive or adjuvant.

1 14. A vaccine comprising as active ingredient a DNA sequence as claimed in claim 1,  
2 optionally further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, diluent, additive or  
3 adjuvant.

1 15. A vaccine as claimed in claim 13, for conferring immunity against autoimmune or  
2 inflammatory disorders.

1 16. The vaccine as claimed claim 15 for conferring immunity against arthritis.

1 17. An antibody directed against a B cell epitope peptide comprising the amino acid  
2 sequence as denoted by SEQ ID NO:1.

1 18. An antibody directed against a B cell epitope peptide having the amino acid sequence  
2 as denoted by SEQ ID NO:2.

1 19. An antibody directed against a B cell epitope peptide having the amino acid sequence  
2 as denoted by SEQ ID NO:3.

1 20. An antibody directed against a B cell epitope peptide comprising the amino acid  
2 sequence as denoted by SEQ ID NO:4.

1 21. A composition for the passive immunization against an autoimmune or inflammatory  
2 disorder comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of an antibody as claimed in  
3 claim 17.

1 22. A composition as claimed in claim 21, for the prevention or treatment of autoimmune  
2 or inflammatory disorder.

1 23. A method for predicting the susceptibility/predisposition of an individual to arthritis  
2 by testing a sample of serum from said individual for the presence of antibodies directed  
3 against a peptide as claimed in claim 1, by suitable immunoassay techniques.